

MINUTES of MEETING January 8, 2010
of the
OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE ADVISORY GROUP (OHVAG)
of
ARIZONA STATE PARKS
Arizona State Parks Board Room

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Pete Pfeifer, Vice-Chair Rebecca Antle (by phone), Bob Biegel, John Savino, Hank Rogers, Drew John, David Moore (by phone). Robert Baldwin announced a quorum is present. Meeting started approximately 1:25 pm due to issues with the recording system and conference phone.

B. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

Jay Ziemann, Asst Director; Renée Bahl, Executive Director; Annie McVay, State Trails Coordinator; Robert Baldwin, Recreational Trails Grants Coordinator; Maria Robles, MotoTrax (member of public)

C. ACTION ITEMS

Chair Pfeifer changed the order of the action items to accommodate presenters. Jay Ziemann presented Item #3 immediately after Director Bahl's presentation. Minutes were approved after Asst. Director Ziemann's presentation. Annie McVay combined the discussion of Items 4 & 5. Then she discussed Sub-Committee Report #2 with David and Bob before leaving the meeting. Hank Rogers discussed Item #7 so he could leave. The Group discussed Item #6 last.

1. Introductory Remarks by State Parks Director, Renée Bahl.

Bahl I am very glad to be here. On behalf of the Parks Board, thank you for your service. Presented proclamations.

I've been here six months and I know the people of Arizona enjoy the outdoors. We need to continue to preserve and enhance opportunities for people to get outside. We have an enormous budget problem. I have outlined the issues with staff and the outcome could be devastating. The Parks Board will meet on January 15th and has some difficult decisions to make. We are trying to maintain ourselves as an agency. I know when the economy improves we will come back stronger than ever. Our long-term future is bright. We have a beautiful park system.

Rogers I appreciate that Ms. Bahl has reached out to us and find out what we are all about. We appreciate your hard work in this difficult time.

Pfeifer I would like to see that this relationship continues and improves going forward. In the past we have felt very isolated.

Bahl We definitely want to remedy that. If things were better right now I would say that could happen quickly. You are an important part of what State Parks is about and I am interested in what you do. I will be meeting with all of the advisory committees.

3. Presentation by Doris Pulsifer, Chief of Grants. Ms. Pulsifer will present information on the amount of OHV Recreation Fund money available to distribute to projects. Doris Pulsifer was unable to attend the meeting and Assistant Director Jay Ziemann made the presentation.

Ziemann I echo Renée's sentiments. Director Bahl and I met with Hank and Drew regarding the status of the OHV Fund money. Handout shows current balance of cash available of \$309,691. FRAT and EBT are legislative terms. A FRAT reduces the agency's authority to spend that money, they have transferred (swept) those monies to the general fund. EBT is a flat-out sweep, they saw money in the fund and they took it. The \$300k is the amount in the account right now. The next set of numbers indicate the money we expect through the end of the fiscal year. Those amounts include gas tax revenue, sticker revenue, and interest totaling \$1.9m. The next projection is very conservative and include the administrative portion (\$500k) and the legislative appropriation for operating State Parks (\$692k). These amounts have not been legislated to us yet, but represent historically typical appropriations. I have fought against the legislation that transfers the \$692,100 to us since 2003. You can certainly talk to Jerry Weiers about that amount. I have mentioned this to him every time they put this in the budget legislation. This is money in the "fund" which includes gas tax and sticker revenues.

Pfeifer Are we talking about the sticker money being swept as well as the gas tax money?

Ziemann It's all in one fund.

Pfeifer The people that are buying the stickers want to know if the legislature is taking this money.

Ziemann No sticker money has been swept at this time. The handout showing the State Parks budget reduction enacted in the 5th Special Session shows FRATs and EBTs. The total reduction is \$8.6m. It was originally drafted as \$9.3m. This included \$700k from the OHV Fund. Your fierce advocate, Jerry Weiers, went to leadership and said the reduction would be exactly what Ron Gould said would happen when the OHV legislation was passed. This lead them to eliminate that cut.

Biegel I heard they make it an actual law.

Antle It was an amendment. It was the only amendment during the special session.

Biegel So that makes it a law.

Ziemann It doesn't prevent other action in the future. It only applies to this session. OHVAG needs to know that Jerry Weiers is a stronger advocate for the OHV program than any advocate State Parks has. You must thank him for this advocacy and keep him informed of future activities. The "Arizona State Parks – FY2010 Approved Operating Budget..." handout shows all the funds coming into the agency. The Morrison Institute study estimated that an appropriate budget to run State Parks should be between \$30-\$34 million annually. Last year the budget was \$27 million. On July 1, 2009 beginning this fiscal year we had a budget of \$21 million. After the December special session, our operating budget is \$7.5 million. The Parks Board was apprised of this situation in a special meeting on December 31st. They will meet again on January 15th to review the staff recommendations to reduce agency operation in light of the new budget amount. The Parks Board is going to need to adopt all kinds of things including park closures. The Parks Board is handcuffed by the statutory limits and constraint on how certain funds can be used. They are not in control of their budget. The list of legislative changes that need to be made is part of the staff recommendation and it does include the OHV Fund. For instance, only the legislature can change the Heritage Fund so that more than 20% of the fund can be used by any one entity (governmental unit). That way State Parks could use more of that fund.

John A lot of people look at the figures and say, "How can they close a park when it is creating revenue?" They don't see that the park has a negative net operating cost.

Ziemann Staff is approaching the park closure issue as if it is a "financial problem" that has to be solved. The critical thing that has killed our ability to operate has been reducing the enhancement fund to zero by the end of this fiscal year. The enhancement fund is the revenues we generate at our parks; entrance fee, camping fees, hookup fees, etc. In the last legislative session State Parks lost all General Fund appropriations. The General Fund is no longer subsidizing the park system. The legislature has told us to raise our fees and live on the revenue we generate. And now they have turned around and taken those revenues. So they are no longer subsidizing the historic parks that don't generate a positive cash flow and they are taking away our ability to operate parks that do create more revenue than the operating cost. The enhancement fund is used entirely to fund the people in our parks. With no money in the fund on July 1st there is no way to pay anybody. We will not be able to open the fiscal year. That's why we are starting now to wind things down so that we can close the doors in a responsible manner. The focus of our suggestions involve things that don't cost the State anything. They involve funds that we already have access to, but need some changes so we have access to more of the money. Another fund that comes to mind is the Law Enforcement & Boating Safety Fund. This is about \$2 million per year that is allocated to county sheriffs to enforce boating laws. We could use this money to fund our own law enforcement officers in our water access parks. This would help backfill the enhancement fund so we would have money to begin the

year. The is essentially why we are "double dipping" from this year's OHV fund, the \$500k and \$692k.

Biegel Isn't the use of the \$500k dictated in statue for administration of the OHV program?

Rogers The law is pretty much written for the administration of our programs and we would like to see it used that way, but once it's in the State Parks budget they can use it anyway they want to.

Ziemann The 12% (\$500k) is designed to administer the OHV program. The \$692,100 was given to us in 2003 when they cut the general fund appropriation by that same amount. This appropriation has no relation to anything in the OHV Fund. That is the gloomy budget news. We are going to see park closures and additional layoffs in the Phoenix office almost assuredly. We going to work with the Governor and Legislature to get some of these fund put back into our budget. A healthy state parks system is good for the OHV Fund. Your support and encouragement for Jerry Weiers is going to help protect this fund.

Rogers You said you really don't have a strong advocate in the legislature to support State Parks, especially with lots of legislators with parks in their districts.

Ziemann Here is the litmus test. When there are \$9.3m in cuts listed on the budget and Jerry Weiers goes to leadership and says if you don't take the OHV Fund cuts out of there, you will not only lose my vote, but I will get others to vote no. Any of the other legislator with an interest in the parks system could have gone to leadership and said "I think these cuts are overly burdensome to the State Parks system and could close parks in my district that would be crippling to the economy in my district. If you don't take them out, I will be a no vote." It would only have taken one republican senator to do that. Now the issue is to get the money put back and that could be very difficult in this climate.

John And we will see these recommendations when the Parks Board meets next week?

Ziemann They should be posted online on Monday and we expect a lot of media attention this week. Next Wednesday we are convening a meeting of all of the Parks Board advisory groups to talk about the budget and present the recommendations in anticipation of the Parks Board meeting on Friday. We did not include OHVAG because we had this meeting scheduled and you have now received the budget information. If you would like to be included in the Wednesday meeting, we will need to add you to the agenda to avoid open meeting law violations. You can attend by phone. The meeting is at noon on Wednesday.

John That night is the dinner with legislators and county supervisors. Who would be good people to talk to?

Ziemann You should approach leadership if you can. Sylvia Allen needs to hear that the parks are important and the recent cuts are catastrophic. I told her that and I think she heard it, but by the time the final bill is printed and the votes are lined up, it's very difficult for legislators to change their vote. Unless you are willing to peril the possibility of being "marginalized" (the leadership can make things difficult for you), it is too late at that point. Any legislator you can talk to that thinks this important can help.

Biegel I might be somewhat confused. It appears that a lot of the legislation done in this state is done under the table. My concern is that I really don't understand that if they decided not to fund State Parks, why would they even consider taking away the revenue State Parks generates from its parks? They're not giving you any money, let you keep what you earn. That make perfect sense to me.

Ziemann I concur thoroughly. Especially since they have dictated that we operate on our revenue. Here's the problem for the legislature...

Biegel They have no money.

Ziemann They have no money, they are \$1.5 billion in debt this year and looking at another \$3 billion next year. The State budget is between \$8-9 billion. Six billion of that they can't touch because it is federally matched or voter protected. So they really only have \$2 billion that needs to be cut by \$1.5 billion. They need to look at unprecedented options of borrowing money, raising taxes, or rolling it over. They have not been forthcoming with suggestions to solve this problem. They repeated go back to the funds they can grab, including State Parks revenues, and they hit those time after time after time to make some small dent in that deficit.

John They are responding like a business that keeps scaling back costs, which decreases revenues, which leads to more cost cutting, until they are no longer in business. This response doesn't solve the lack of revenue problem.

Ziemann I explained to the legislators during the special session that the proposed cuts hurt us so badly that we have to lay off people, which means closing parks, which means loss of revenue and more people cut. It is a death spiral. Our recommendations to the Parks Board help flatten that spiral so that the end in not as eminent. But without consistent, sustained funding, it is still inevitable.

Savino How many state parks do you operate? How many make a profit?

Ziemann We have 27 parks and 3 natural areas. Only about six generate net revenue. One solution that comes up often is to just privatize the park system. Privatization only works if there is profit to be made. Nobody want to run the parks on the bottom, but the truth is the legislature created those parks. They seem to think we should give away all the money makers and then operate with a bunch of parks that don't make money. How is that supposed to work? When I ask them "Is it your intention to close down the parks system?" None of them say yes.

Rogers So what are the best case and worst case scenarios?

Ziemann Absolute worst case is if we don't get the cash infusion we need to begin operation on July 1st, you could be looking at the only state in the union without a state parks system. The best case we hope for will be legislative cooperation in getting access to the funds we have suggested and enough money on July 1st to keep a greatly reduced system operating until we can generate the revenue we need to slowly open other parks.

Rogers Where does that leave OHVAG in the worst case? Are there any options?

Biegel We can go to the legislature as a group to find out how they propose to distribute the money they are collecting in the fund from gas taxes and sticker fees that are intended for OHV program use. OHV activity generates other tax revenue for the state.

Savino I'm going to play devil's advocate. As a legislator I'll come back to you and say what is more important, schools or OHVs?

Biegel That response would be schools. But, the state needs to consider all possible revenue sources and OHV activities certainly are a part of that. In addition to the gas taxes there are sales taxes from equipment, parts, repairs, travel and food cost, etc.

Ziemann My suggestion is that you determine what is the best use of the funds you have to develop projects that you can show to legislators and explain how those projects will impact the revenues in that area. Users supported the OHV legislation with the assurance that they would benefit from the fees.

John If the legislature sees that they can take these funds without much opposition from the user, they will continue to do it and the users will see no need to continue purchasing the stickers.

Savino In the Pinetop-Lakeside area 90% of the users have a sticker. But along the Colorado River where I am now, I rarely see a sticker. Last year when I was there promoting the sticker everyone was saying it would just get swept anyway. Now this year they are saying "I told you so."

Ziemann That is not true. It has not been swept yet because of the actions of Jerry Weiers.

Rogers The point to make is that a "street legal" vehicle with a sticker only pays a fourth of what it pays without one.

Ziemann The primary response right now to the question, "why should I buy a sticker", is that the fund is operating exactly as it was designed. It has not been swept. Game & Fish is using their portion to hire law enforcement officers and State Parks is eager to solicit worthy projects and get the money spent.

Rogers We need to demonstrate to the river crowd that they are wrong and we are spending the money.

Pfeifer We want to make our presence known in the OHV community and we have asked for shirts, hats, or vests to identify us when we attend events.

Ziemann I should alert you to the Environmental Day at the capitol on Monday, February 1st. The Sierra Club is sponsoring the day and part of their focus will be to save state parks. The state off-highway vehicle program can have a booth to promote responsible use and resource protection.

Rogers ...mentioned funding for environmental clearances on the Apache NF that was approved by the environmental group which included a multi-use staging area at Terry Flat.

Savino ...initiated a discussion about including OHV use in some of the state parks, like Lyman Lake. There are riding areas across the street from River Island State Park. Why not make more parks OHV friendly? How soon would state parks start closing?

Ziemann Some will close as soon as February with more closing before the end of this fiscal year. The intention is not to walk away from any of the facilities we currently have. Every park in our system is worthy of being a state park. Eighty percent of our cost of operating parks is the cost of people. A loss of funds cannot be absorbed by turning down the air conditioners or selling equipment. It has to result in the loss of people and without people to keep our parks safe and maintained, we have to close parks. Then when times are better, it is difficult to replace the people who know the parks and what it takes to keep them operating. I feel for the Parks Board. They are volunteers just as you are. It is extremely difficult for them to have to close state parks and lay people off. That is not the gig they sign up for.

John Is there any chance that after the legislature sees the staff recommendations and realizes what it might do to their district that they will do anything before Friday when the Board meets?

Ziemann They certainly have the ability to make law, but it is not likely they will do anything. I have been getting calls from legislators who didn't realize that taking the State Parks Fund meant they were "stealing donation". They didn't like being called "grave robbers". Whether they realized what they were taking or not does not relieve them of the responsibility for doing it. They saw a dollar figure and they took it. I expect to see legislation in the new session that will address our short-term needs. The results of the Morrison Institute study that recommend a long-term funding source and the Governor's Committee on Sustainability recommendation to add a voluntary fee to vehicle license registrations will be considered. I think we are just approaching the realization of the effect these cuts and the closure of parks will have on local economies. People are going to be upset. I appreciate your time and I am

always available to answer questions. I will see that you are included in the agenda for Wednesday's meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes from the October 30, 2009 Meeting.

Pfeifer Is there a motion for the approval of the minutes from the 10/31/09 meeting?

Biegel Moved. Savino Second.

Pfeifer Any further discussion? Any objection? So moved.

Pfeifer Is there any word on the access guides Bill Gibson said might be available by the end of the year?

Baldwin I have not received anything from him and will follow up on that.

4. Review and discuss results of May 20, 2009 agency partners meeting. Staff and agency partners discussed the future of OHV funding programs.

5. Discussion to Determine Priority Uses for Project Funds. OHVAG will be asked for comments and suggestions on what types of projects should be funded and for what amounts.

McVay We have \$309,000 to spend and we can make a decision on that today. Staff has a recommendation based on the information on the chart in the packet titled "Future of OHV Funding Programs" and the priority recommendations from the 2010 State Trails Plan. The plan recommendations are the sum of what the public has told us through mail surveys, web surveys, and public sessions and you were included in that process. These are used to guide our grant selection process. Also, we met with agency staff from across the state and asked them about our grant process: what works, what needs improvement. Unfortunately, in the competitive grant process it can take more than a year after the application is submitted before any money hits the ground. We don't have that kind of time now. On the top line (blue boxes) we asked them how they wanted us to distribute the money. One of the top three choices was through a contracted trail crew program such as we are doing with the non-motorized Recreational Trails Program (RTP). We have crews on state contract and we pay them directly to work on the trails for the land manager. This is a quick and clean process where the land manager doesn't have to ask for reimbursement. We asked them how they feel about the Competitive Grant Process. The Multi-Agency Partnerships category is where we meet with our partners to discuss issues and resolutions, not specifically tied to dollars. Facilitated Meetings was another category. Large Project Agreements are how the OHV funds have been used in the past. Small Project Agreements are what have been used to get work done recently. Law Enforcement Distribution is something we were considering if there was a large pool of money, like with the LEBSF program Jay referred to. Workshops/Conferences/Training is another use for the OHV fund. The ones in green got the most votes. The land managers saw the most effective use of the money was to establish and designate routes through large project agreements. Number two for them was to provide and

install sign through crews on State contract. Number three was to increase on-the-ground law enforcement. The primary object of our recommendation is to get the money out the door and on the ground as quickly as possible before it goes away. We also want to make sure the projects are high-profile so that the users know that the money is getting spent on the ground and we can present these results to the legislature to show the impact of the fund. This would involve giving preference to high-use areas. There is really not that much money available, so we don't want to show preference to projects that we know are important and slight other projects. What we are proposing is to use a process similar to the small project agreements, but increase the cap to \$50,000-\$100,000. We would initiate a call for funding requests and then let OHVAG select from those applications. The criteria would favor high-use areas, diversity around the state, and other criteria that we determine today. The initial limit for the projects would be \$309,000, but if more funds become available, we can increase that amount.

Rogers I just dropped off a grant to the Department of Commerce for the Town of Eagar. It's a very simple grant and I think we should keep this process simple. One of the primary considerations should be, "How quickly can you get the money spent?" We need to specify a date that the project must to be completed by. And as the money accumulates in the account, it needs to be assigned to projects.

John My concern is that it's quick and high-profile (meaning we market/promote the accomplishments so that people know what's being done).

Biegel We need to show progress along the Colorado River as quickly as possible to quell the naysayers.

Savino It has been disappointing that we haven't seen more done with the Standard Wash area that we visited over a year ago.

Baldwin They had a grant to complete the cultural survey in that area and I don't think it was ever completed. Remember, it is the agencies that must apply for and complete the projects. This all depends on their workload and priorities and budgets.

Savino If we are revising the process, why does it have to go through agencies?

McVay For the most part, it is the federal agencies who own/manage the land. We thought about education projects that would go to an association, but were not sure that was high-profile enough.

Biegel How about things that don't need a NEPA study? The Ambassador program is one.

Savino Installing restrooms off the Maverick Trail at Sky High Retreat is an excellent idea. That could benefit both motorized and non-motorized uses. Would that involve NEPA?

McVay Most areas that have been disturbed have had the NEPA completed.

John What is the plan for getting the word out?

McVay Our goal is to come up with the criteria today and that's the key point to getting this on the ground. We need to get action quickly, but if agencies are not ready to move, that won't happen.

John Can we announce that so much money is available to each county and it must be spent by a certain date? We applied for a "green" grant that required a quick response and quick project completion. I think by spreading it around the counties, you will get more people involved.

Savino Part of the project at the Maverick Trail involved removing and replacing rock. They ran out of money under the small project grant. Can they get more money and go back in there and finish it?

Baldwin If the agency is being pressured by the users to get a project done, that's the best way to know it will get done. If we offer money to the agencies are they going to submit projects they want to do whether or not they are high-priority and have user support?

Rogers One of the main points in creating this new legislation was to make sure it could be used for NEPA studies and it can. However, the best way to insure the NEPA gets done quickly is to require the agencies to contract the work.

John Will NEPA studies be visible enough to accomplish what we want?

Rogers Not at this point.

McVay I know the statute allows NEPA studies, but at this point I would only allow on-the-ground projects.

Rogers One of the problems we're looking at right now is the Travel Management Rule (TMR). Agencies are reluctant to do anything until it is finalized and that could take years.

McVay We understand the limitation of some projects because of this, but we need to find out if there are any projects that can get done quickly. It looks like we agree that the "small project process" will work best.

Antle How are we going to get the word out? Even though the small projects have been around, whenever I mention them in the Coronado NF, they act like they've never heard of the process.

McVay This small project process was unique. It has not been done every year and received the notoriety of the competitive grant process that has been around for years.

Baldwin Right now we want to identify criteria that we will use to select projects. We don't want them to be competitive grants, but we need to be able to justify why we have selected one project over another.

Savino I suggest \$50,000-\$100,000 projects, no NEPA required or funded, and completed within six months.

John The problem with that much money is that three people could come in and take all the money. It might be high profile for Maricopa or Pima or Pinal counties, but what about the other counties.

McVay You will be the body that selects the projects.

John If only four or five come in, we can only select projects that affect three people (areas).

Rogers We could set a limit of \$30,000. Then we could get ten projects.

Biegel The problem with that is if you don't get ten projects and the money isn't all distributed, we could lose it.

McVay Limiting the money might not inspire an agency to do the kind of visible things we're looking for. But, agencies need some kind of perimeters to determine what they want to do.

John Sometimes limiting the amount may not justify the effort to get it. We would want to be able to select from projects of different costs that meet the criteria: high profile, can be completed quickly. If we have three good projects at \$100,000 each, that's great. If we have ten \$30,000 projects that are worthy, that works, too.

Baldwin What we want to do is create a program that is on-going so that as worthy projects are submitted and funds are available, the projects can be approved and get started. We want to keep the application date open and let people know that the money is available so they will come up with needed projects when they are ready to complete them.

Rogers I think it will be very important to have an informative website that explains the program and application process. Then we just refer people to the website and they can go there anytime year round.

McVay So far your input has suggested that projects range from \$20,000-\$100,000. They should be located in high-use areas and be geographically diversified. The money must be spent on the ground. Possibly allow up to 10% of the amount to be used for NEPA.

Baldwin The issues with NEPA is that if it hasn't been done yet, the project will not be completed within six months or even a year.

Rogers I agree that NEPA needs to be completed for the first round of projects, but down the road people need to know they can get money to complete a NEPA study for a project that will move forward. Also, you have to specify that the NEPA work must be contracted out.

McVay Then we need to look at the priority recommendations list. Priority consideration should go to projects that: maintain and renovate existing routes, mitigate damage in proximity to approved use areas, and providing and installing trail route signs. That would provide documentation of how we select projects. Next we need to come up with a time frame of how we want to announce this. When can we announce the program? When would projects need to be initiated and completed? I think within one year (by June 2011).

Baldwin We are scheduled to report to the Legislature by September 2011 with information on how the funds have been used. Once we get the information out, it's going to be up to the users to get the agencies to do things they want done.

John And once work gets done it is important to get the area properly signed.

McVay We will announce the program electronically through email and steer them to the website to get information on the program and print out application forms. We have extensive lists of government agencies, past grant applicants, and interested groups. We have contact information for most counties and will make sure every county is included.

Baldwin The only way a project will get funded and started quickly is by working with the agencies with existing agreements. That pretty much limits us to BLM, Forest Service, Game & Fish, and State Land Department, but they are the ones with "high-use" areas.

McVay We also have existing agreements with Maricopa and Pinal counties.

Rogers Could we get education money for the Apache-Sitgreaves NF to work with the high school kids? It's a program our club is supporting to educate them on responsible use. I think it's important at this time to get some money for OHVAG shirts to promote the fact that we are here looking out for the fund and user interests. That's education!

Baldwin I will need to investigate how to fund that and where we can purchase the shirts.

Rogers We need to make sure we work with rural areas. That's where most of the recreation is happening. We also need material to send out to our clubs to let them know what OHVAG is doing.

2. Sub-Committee Report – Bob Biegel and/or David Moore will report on the progress of the education and workshop trainings group headed by Annie McVay, State Trails Coordinator

McVay We've had one quick and productive meeting to get ideas on what we want to do. We've selected Saturday, May 22nd in Pine, AZ. We will hold the joint ASCOT-OHVAG meeting on Friday, May 21st, hopefully at the lodge at Tonto Natural Bridge State Park. If construction work is completed we will be able to host both groups overnight in the lodge and then drive up to Pine the next day. We want

to highlight success stories about volunteering on trails in AZ, recruiting/training/retaining volunteers, and obstacle to volunteering. There will be a general session in the morning, then have a long lunch with agency/group/club booths and encourage networking, and finish with two breakout sessions in the afternoon.

Moore I agree that is a good format. We still need to determine how we want organize the volunteers.

McVay We need your suggestions for some appropriate speakers and any subject matter you think we need to address. We are still putting the program together.

Antle Is that date final? I wouldn't be able to make that day as my son is being promoted.

McVay That was the only day in May that facility was available, so we scheduled the joint meeting around that. We can use the kitchen and barbeque to fix dinner at Tonto. Annie exited meeting.

7. Discussion on Meeting with State Parks Director. Hank Rogers and / or Drew John will report on the results of their meeting with Renée Bahl regarding use of OHV funds and program support.

John This was the first time in the six years I've been on OHVAG that I've had the opportunity to sit down with the Director and be frank. We made her aware that there are a lot of concerned citizens out there paying the sticker fee and we need to be kept in the loop about what is going on budget wise. What money is available to be spent? What does it look like the legislature is going to do? I realize the legislature took its last action after our meeting with her and she had no idea at that time what was going to happen. I appreciate that she has indicated she is going to be more involved with us.

Pfeifer I know years ago when I attended OHVAG meeting with a friend in the group that they had a good relationship with Ken Travous. It was when Karchner Caverns was being developed and he could come to southern Arizona and meet with us. The OHVAG members also knew some of the Parks Board members. I would like to resurrect that type of relationship.

Rogers I told her I'm glad to see her as a partner. I don't get the feeling she is anti-OHV as the past director was. We did ask her to revisit reimbursing OHVAG members for their travel expenses, especially the gas. She didn't have any objection to that. So you guys need to turn in your expense reports. When we get this grant program going we may need to meet more frequently and possibly do it by phone. We have a responsibility to get the money spent and we asked her for the money we got today. She gave it to us and I appreciate that. That was the purpose of Drew and I going in there and she promised she would have it for us at this meeting. We definitely need to look what happens if State Parks closes its doors. We still have the money coming in and we need to move the program somewhere else.

Baldwin If the agency stays open the problem of having sustainable funding needs to be solved. State Parks needs to have a budget that does not rely on using all of these funds for operations.

Rogers I think Renée wants us here and I don't think it's just because of the money. That's part of it, but she is concerned about OHV activities and she is sincere about that.

Baldwin Hank came in last week with a proposal to help Lyman Lake State Park by including OHV use. We should use the fund to develop opportunities in state parks and the agency will benefit from it.

Rogers I suggested it might be time to think out of the box and consider other recreational activities that could generate revenue in the parks. My suggestion was for Lyman Lake, but there may be other parks that could benefit.

Savino My RV is parked at River Island State Park and all kinds of riding is available right across the street from the park.

Baldwin We are currently allowing access to BLM land from Alamo Lake State Park. There is a section in one of the RV hook-up areas that provides an exit from the park to riding areas.

6. Discussion on OHVAG Goals. The Group will continue the discussion from the October 30, 2009 meeting regarding goals for 2010 and the use of sub-committees to accomplish the chosen goals.

Pfeifer We are brainstorming now about the types of events we might include on a list to attend.

Savino I definitely think Hank's jamboree is an excellent choice. We should be visible at other UTV/ATV jamborees.

Biegel This is why we need shirts to identify ourselves.

Savino Shirts and jackets would be the priority over a hat or vest. Something like the shirt Bob has on (long sleeve, button down oxford with State Parks logo). Also, Amy said we notify local papers when new OHVAG members are appointed and that never happened.

Antle I think it's more than just acknowledging new members. We need to have more contact with local papers. They need to know who to call in their area for info about OHV activities. I have gotten calls in the past, but not much lately. I recently got a call from someone in New York about Arizona activities.

Pfeifer In Tucson one of our local club members used to get calls from the newspaper when OHV stuff was happening to get the club viewpoint.

Moore I think we need to do some press releases when things are happening.

Savino We need to dispel the rumors that the OHV money is being taken and that this advisory group is working diligently to get this money back into the OHV community.

Baldwin I will talk with our Public Information Officer (PIO) about getting things out in a timely manner. We can't go back now and announce the news from a November Parks Board meeting. But I agree we need to make the OHVAG activities more visible and announcing this new grant program will give us an opportunity to open up the avenues for communication.

Pfeifer Game & Fish has a half hour TV program that sometimes features OHV activities. We need to contact them about doing a spot on the "sticker fund" grants.

Baldwin We need to get the particulars of the program identified and then coordinate a multi-media blitz to get the information out. We can include how OHVAG participates in the process and the other things it does to benefit the OHV community. This information gets better press in the small town papers.

Moore We need to notify each other of the OHV events in our area. We can send them to Bob to send out.

Baldwin That's the kind of thing one of your subcommittees could coordinate. You can communicate with each other. You just need to be sure that you are not responding to everyone with your comments.

Savino The Parker 400 is coming up this weekend. We could have a booth there to promote our accomplishments. We need to get going on this, not just talking about it.

John Whether we have a booth or not, we can introduce ourselves to whoever is in charge and tell them what we do and how we can help promote their event and, if not address the crowd, at least we would make some good contacts and let them know we are around to answer questions. This is where the shirts would come in handy.

Pfeifer Everyone needs to start sending me dates and I will put a calendar together to share with the Group. Rebecca, get me the stuff on your calendar. Dave, you too. Are there any other goals we need to address.

Moore I would like to see some publicity about the volunteer event in May.

Baldwin I believe that attendance there will be by registration only and somewhat limited. We can certainly include that in the types of things the Group is involved with.

D. REPORTS - Committee and staff reports may be written or verbal.

1. Chair's Report

Pfeifer I don't have a Chair report at this time and we covered Bob & Dave's report on the training sub-committee.

2. Staff Reports

a) Update on Arizona State Parks Board actions

Baldwin Update on Parks Board actions. At the November meeting Pete was reappointed as an OHVAG member from January 2010 through December 2012. Drew was approved until a replacement could be appointed. OHVAG applications are available on the State Parks website and new members are solicited on a continual basis. Presently, a new member must come from outside of Maricopa or Pima counties and must represent an ATV or motorcycle club. It's up to you guys to let people know they can apply.

The Eagar OHV project for the Saffel Canyon Trail renovation was awarded funding.

I provided information in your packets regarding the OHV fund revenues. Page A was included in the information Jay Ziemann went over. I didn't have that to send out when I sent the packet, so I will get that to Dave and Becky. Pages B & C show all OHV fund revenue from gas tax and stickers. These sheets show our fiscal year which runs from July through June. Sticker revenues began in January 2009 so this would be the last half of State Parks fiscal year 2009. Then fiscal year 2010 starts in July 2009 and shows revenues since then. The bottom line is that we have received revenues approximately \$1.8 million in sticker revenue for 10 months through October. Since the sticker runs on a Jan-Dec calendar, the revenues for the last two months of 2009 should be small. In the same light, since more people are aware of the requirement and that the stickers start in January, I would assume a greater portion of the \$1.8 would be received in the first few months of 2010. And all the people that have just found out they need a sticker will be increasing that revenue.

Biegel The fine for not having the sticker is \$425.

Pfeifer Amy told us at one time that there are more than 300,000 ATVs and dirt bikes that are required to have the sticker.

Baldwin Our goal today was to identify a program to get the existing \$309k out the door quickly. As other funds become available, we can approve funds for larger long-term projects. These projects may include acquisition of easements which can take time.

b) Update on status of RTP funds

John Did we get federal money?

Baldwin I'm not sure of the status of the RTP money at this time. It was awarded under a continuing resolution through December 18th, 2009. I have not heard of a further continuation. I will email that information when I get it. There has been talk that the annual apportionment would be increased. However, just like the state

government, they rescinded \$425k from our 2009 apportionment. I know that the federal agencies are getting stimulus money that they are using for trail projects. Today the BLM had a ribbon cutting for work to be done on the Black Canyon Trail using about \$300k in stimulus funds. And I know our state contracts trail crews that do our non-motorized trail work are being kept busy with Forest Service projects.

We need to get this new OHV Recreation Fund program up and running and accept applications as the sponsors are ready. Then we can award funds as they become available.

Savino Hopefully we will get enough applications from this first announcement that we can pick and choose the best first and fund the others later.

Biegel Is there a way to streamline the grant application reduce the paperwork and speed up the process?

Baldwin These will not be "competitive grants". There are state requirements we must meet when we administer a competitive grant process. These applications can be relatively simple. However, the program needs clear parameters so that we get the information we need to determine exactly what the sponsor wants to do and so we can justify awarding one project over another. There has to be enough paper to identify and document everything that is being done. We will coordinate press releases with each step of the program: announcing funds available, awarding projects, announcing completed projects.

- E. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC** - During the public meeting the Committee may afford any person the opportunity to present statements relating to agenda items, with or without the opportunity to present them orally. Those wishing to address the Committee must register at the door and be recognized by the Chair. Each presentation will be given approximately five minutes if time permits. It is probable that each presentation will be limited to one person per organization. Action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study or re-schedule the matter for further consideration at a later time.

No public comments offered.

F. SUMMARY OF CURRENT EVENTS, MATTERS OF BOARD PROCEDURE, REQUESTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Baldwin The next scheduled meeting at this time is May 21st at Tonto Natural Bridge State Park. Depending on how the project application process proceeds, we may need to meet before that in late March. We can use a telephonic conference.

Biegel If State Parks is going to reimburse us, what about the paperwork that has been submitted?

Savino Can you send us more forms?

- G. **ADJOURNMENT – approximately 4pm** Biegel - Motion / Savino - Second